

## LETTER XXX

KOTRANIS, KURDISTAN, *Oct.*  
28.

HERE, in one of the wildest of mountain hamlets, I hoped to indulge in the luxury of my tent, and it was actually unrolled, when all the village men came to me and with gestures of appeal besought me not to pitch it, as it would not be safe for one hour and would "bring trouble upon them." The hamlet is suffering terribly from the Kurds, Y^ho are not only robbing it of its sheep and most else, but are attempting to deprive the peasants of their lands in spite of the fact that they possess title-deeds. This Berwar-Lata valley has been reduced from a condition of pastoral wealth to one of extreme poverty. Kotranis, and Bilar a little lower down, from which the best hones are exported, are ruined by Kurdish exactions. The Christians sow and the Kurds reap: they breed cattle and sheep and the Kurds drive them off when they are well grown. One man at a few miles off, had 1000 sheep. He has been robbed of all but sixty. This is but a specimen of the wrongs to which these unhappy people are exposed. The Kurds now scarcely give them any respite in which "to let the sheep's wool grow" as their phrase is.

Kotranis is my last Syrian halting-place, and its

miseries are well fitted to leave a lasting  
impression. It  
is included in the *vilayet* of Yan, in which,  
according to  
the latest estimates, there are 80,000  
Syrian Christians\*